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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/625,503

07/22/2003

Randall J. Huebner

ACM 349

8089

23581

7590

06/26/2006

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EXAMINER

ARAJ, MICHAEL J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3733

DATE MAILED: 06/26/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/625,503

Applicant(s)

HUEBNER ET AL.

Examiner

Michael J. Araj

Art Unit

3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 41-73 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 47, 54, 70 and 73 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 41-46, 48-53, 55, 57-60, 62-69, 71 and 72 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 56 and 61 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>see additional sheet</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

10/04/2004, 3/3/2005, 10/26/2005, 1/13/2006

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election of Species 1, Figure 1 in the reply filed on April 11, 2006 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 41-46, 48-53, 55, 57-60, 62-69, 71 and 72 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LeHuec et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,156,037).

LeHuec et al. disclose a method of fusing at least two bones (13 and 14) comprising selecting a bone plate (11) including a body portion with a bone-facing surface and further including a post extending from the bone-facing surface of the body portion; placing the bone plate into a first and second cavity formed by at least two bones such that the post restricts movement of the body portion in one step; and attaching the bone plate to the at least two bones using fasteners. The post (12), which is separate from the plate, is implanted in between the two bones causing the part of the two bone surfaces adjacent to the post to cause recesses in both bones upon entry and is at least partially in a pre-existing gap between the at least two bones (13 and 14).

Art Unit: 3733

The bone plate selected includes a bone-facing surface that is convex, and wherein the step of removing includes forming a cavity at least partially defined by a concave bone surface (see Figure 1 below). The post is disposed in threaded engagement with the body portion and is substantially centered on the body portion. The bone plate includes a body portion with a bone-facing surface corresponding to a portion of a sphere that is less than half of a sphere. Also disclosed is a bone plate defining a central axis and a plurality of openings arranged around the central axis, wherein each of the plurality of openings defines an axis extending obliquely to the central axis, and wherein the step of attaching includes a step of placing bone screws through at least two of the plurality of openings. The openings are configured such that a bone screw can be placed at multiple positions along them (see Figure 1-'037). The perimeter and bone-opposing surface that opposes the bone-facing surface has a thickness greater than the average thickness of the body portion measured between the bone-facing and bone-opposing surfaces. The body portion has a width and a height, where the height is substantially less than half the width (see Figure 1 below).

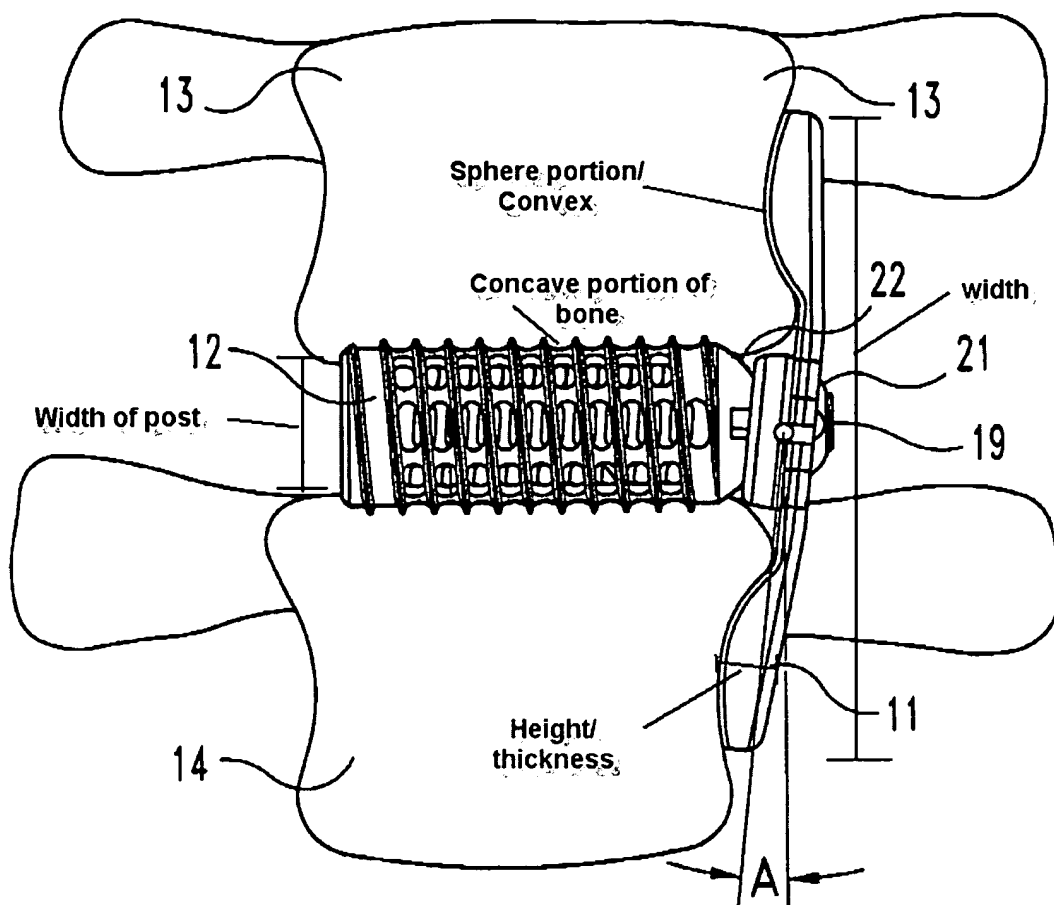


Figure 1

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 56 and 61 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

**Conclusion**

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892 for art cited of interest.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael J. Araj whose telephone number is 571-272-5963. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
MJA

  
EDUARDO C. ROBERT  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER